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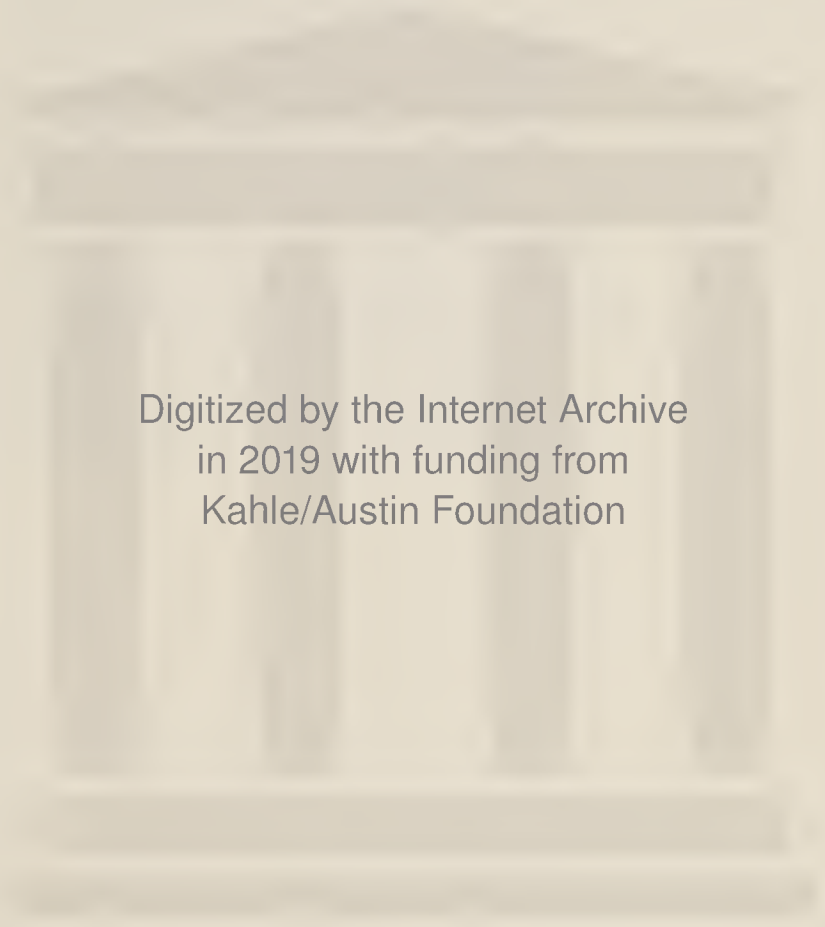
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**POEMS WRITTEN IN DISCOURAGE-
MENT, 1912-1913**

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POEMS WRITTEN IN DISCOURAGEMENT, 1912-1913

TO A WEALTHY MAN, WHO PROMISED A SECOND SUBSCRIPTION
IF IT WERE PROVED THE PEOPLE
WANTED PICTURES

You gave but will not give again
Until enough of Paudeen's pence
By Biddy's halfpennies have lain
To be 'some sort of evidence'
Before you'll put your guineas down
That things it were a pride to give
Are what the blind and ignorant town
Imagines best to make it thrive.
What cared Duke Ercole that bid
His mummers to the market place;

What th' onion-sellers thought or did
So that his Plautus set the pace
For the Italian comedies?
And Guidobaldo when he made
That grammar school of courtesies,
Where wit and beauty learned their trade
Upon Urbino's windy hill,
Had sent no runners to and fro
That he might learn the shepherds' will;
And when they drove out Cosimo,
Indifferent how the rancour ran.
He gave the hours they had set free
To Michelozzo's latest plan
For the San Marco Library;
Whence turbulent Italy should draw
Delight in Art whose end is peace
In logic and in natural law
By sucking at the dugs of Greece.

Your open hand but shows our loss,
For he knew better how to live.
Let Paudeens play at pitch and toss,
Look up in the sun's eye and give
What the exultant heart calls good
That some new day may breed the best
Because you gave, not what they would
But the right twigs for an eagle's nest !

December, 1912.

SEPTEMBER, 1913

What need you, being come to sense,
But fumble in a greasy till
And add the halfpence to the pence
And prayer to shivering prayer, until
You have dried the marrow from the bone;
For men were born to pray and save,

Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Yet they were of a different kind
The names that stilled your childish play
They have gone about the world like wind,
But little time had they to pray
For whom the hangman's rope was spun,
And what, God help us, could they save:
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Was it for this the wild geese spread
The grey wing upon every tide;
For this that all that blood was shed,
For this Edward Fitzgerald died,
And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone,

All that delirium of the brave;
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave:

Yet could we turn the years again,
And call those exiles as they were,
In all their loneliness and pain
You'd cry 'some woman's yellow hair
Has maddened every mother's son:'
They weighed so lightly what they gave,
But let them be, they're dead and gone,
They're with O'Leary in the grave.

TO A FRIEND WHOSE WORK
HAS COME TO NOTHING
Now all the truth is out,
Be secret and take defeat

From any brazen throat,
For how can you compete,
Being honour bred, with one
Who were it proved he lies
Were neither shamed in his own
Nor in his neighbours' eyes;
Bred to a harder thing
Than Triumph, turn away
And like a laughing string
Whereon mad fingers play
Amid a place of stone,
Be secret and exult,
Because of all things known
That is most difficult.

PAUDEEN

Indignant at the fumbling wits, the obscure spite
Of our old Paudeen in his shop, I stumbled blind

Among the stones and thorn trees, under morning light,
Until a curlew cried and in the luminous wind
A curlew answered, and I was startled by the thought
That on the lonely height where all are in God's eye,
There cannot be, confusion of our sound forgot,
A single soul that lacks a sweet crystalline cry.

TO A SHADE

If you have revisited the town, thin Shade,
Whether to look upon your monument
(I wonder if the builder has been paid)
Or happier thoughted when the day is spent
To drink of that salt breath out of the sea
When grey gulls fly about instead of men,
And the gaunt houses put on majesty:
Let these content you and be gone again;
For they are at their old tricks yet.

A man

Of your own passionate serving kind who had brought
In his full hands what, had they only known,
Had given their children's children loftier thought
Sweeter emotion, working in their veins
Like gentle blood, has been driven from the place,
And insult heaped upon him for his pains
And for his open-handedness, disgrace;
An old foul mouth that once cried out on you
Herding the pack.

Unquiet wanderer

Draw the Glasnevin coverlet anew
About your head till the dust stops your ear,
The time for you to taste of that salt breath
And listen at the corners has not come;
You had enough of sorrow before death —
Away, away ! You are safer in the tomb.

September, 29th. 1913.

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